



Central Vancouver Island
Multicultural Society



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Special Thanks to Nanette Leather for editing and graphics on this report!

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

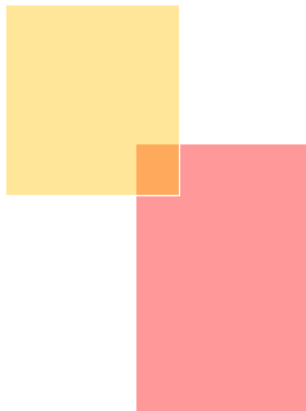
A Message from the President



The Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society has been very busy over the past year providing a range of services to help newcomers. Since late 2015 the Society has been called upon to increase the amount of services it provides, as the area has welcomed many Syrian newcomers. As a result, CVIMS was asked to develop a plan to accommodate a large number of Syrian families entering our area along with providing them with all necessary service and support in order to help them adjust to a new life in Nanaimo. As a group we welcomed them to our community along with other newcomers.

The Society could not have accomplished this increase in services without the enthusiasm and commitment of the entire Management Team and staff of CVIMS led by the Executive Director. Your involvement has contributed to dreams coming through for many people.

The Board of Directors expresses its sincere appreciation to the Management Team, Volunteers and the general community for all the efforts and dedication over the entire year but especially since the arrival of our Syrian families. We celebrate with all of you the accomplishments over the past year and look forward to working with you in the coming year.



Thank you,

Sharif Kishawi
President

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As of March 31, 2016



SHARIF KISHAWI
PRESIDENT



DR. GRAHAM PIKE
VICE PRESIDENT



MINDY KAILLY
TREASURER



MAUREEN SHAKESPEARE
SECRETARY



WINNIE WONG
MEMBER AT LARGE



JOE MARRIE
June 2015 - March 2016

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A Message from the Executive Director

It is with a mix of sadness and relief that I approach retirement and sit down to write my very last Annual Report. I look fondly back on my 13 years as Executive Director and although at times the work was highly stressful and demanding, I know I will truly miss the wonderful people, past and present – staff, clients, volunteers, Boards, members and community colleagues - who make up the Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society. I served under many evolutions of the Board with changing members, led by 6 different Presidents.

As always, the year was very busy. In the spring of 2015 the Board of Directors incorporated a Wholly Owned Subsidiary (WOS) for the purpose of engaging in social enterprise. The subsidiary is a company owned by the Society which can operate a business or invest in an enterprise, donating profits and dividends to the Society without jeopardizing our charitable status. Sharif Kishawi, Graham Pike and Maureen Shakespeare were appointed as Directors of the WOS. The intent is to purchase rental property to diversify our funding and possibly to provide subsidized housing for newcomer clients, especially refugees. Hopefully this will happen soon.



At the September 2015 AGM, the Board presented and the membership ratified a revised Mission Statement to reflect the growing diversity of clients we serve:

“We are leaders in providing services to our community, with a focus on newcomers. We are committed to the values of equity and diversity and to promoting inclusion and respect for all peoples.”

Also at the same AGM and in response to the Syrian refugee crisis, the Society announced the creation of the Syrian Refugee Fund, which we seeded with \$20,000 of our savings. By March 31, 2016, a very generous local community had donated an additional \$17,905. (further information about the fund is available later in this report)

The summer of 2015 was spent responding to the 3 year National Call for Proposals to then Citizenship and Immigration Canada CIC (now changed to Immigration, Refugees & Citizenship Canada IRCC). This current program is 60-65% of our budget and includes settlement services, LINC Language training, the HIPPY program, child minding, community connections, employment services; in total 23+ staff. In October 2015 we also secured and opened 2 new programs, Job Ready and PBLT - Project Based Language Training.

As you all know, with the national election and change of government, Canada opened its doors wider to refugees. On March 3, 2016 we welcomed 8 refugee families with another 3 arriving a short time later. You can read more about our new Refugee Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) in the pages of this report.

The Society is almost 38 years old and has grown from a small grassroots, volunteer group to an annual budget of \$2M, which for the past 20 years has followed a structure with a clear Governance Model. As the Board's only employee, the Executive Director is charged with not only managing but securing all programs, contracts, supports, staff and resources required for operations. Today we have state-of-the-art facilities and equipment; a variety of programs and services offering clients a holistic approach to integration; professional staff with a high level of core competencies; a solid foundation of Policies and Best Practices in service delivery; and sophisticated collaborations with community, governmental and non-governmental agencies.

For the Society now, this is a time of inevitable change as Executive Directors do turn over, just like other staff and Board members. With

change comes opportunity... for renewed growth, new ideas, new talent....

To the many **Board Members** who have come and gone, thank you for the opportunity to work here. A number of you in the past have especially been instrumental in providing the leadership and vision driving CVIMS forward.

It has been my honour and my great pleasure to serve the Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society for the past 13 years, 2 months and 14 days. ☺ I hope that in some way my contribution has been of value to the Society and most importantly to our clients and the community. In my retirement I will continue to be an interested and supportive member, a friend and maybe at times, even a volunteer.

To the staff, past and present, I thank you more than I can say. I will miss you all so much. You are the core, the essence and the substance that makes this Society great!

Best of luck in your future, CVIMS....it's looking pretty bright from here!!

With deepest respect and affection,

Hilde Schlosar
Executive Director

IN THE COMMUNITY

Just a sample of our representation on community committees ...

Greater Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors: Hilde

Immigrant Integration Steering Committee, AMSSA of BC: Hilde

VIU Social Work Advisory Committee: Hilde

AMSSA of BC Research Advisory Committee: Hilde

AMSSA of BC Employment Services Advisory Committee: Hilde/ Robert

LISTN Board, LISTN BC: Robert

Editorial Committee of Cultures West Magazine: Robert

Nanaimo Youth Advocates Meeting: Jennifer

Building Supports Housing Project (*Housing Access for Immigrant & Refugee Women Leaving Violence*): Rim

Community Coordination for Domestic Safety Committee: Rim

EPBC Case Management Meetings: Charlee, Elena

VIU ECEC Community Advisory Committee: Sue

Greater Nanaimo Early Years Partnership Committee, Cultural Engagement: Swedini

Nanaimo Filipino Canadian Association: Daisy

Syrian Refugee Crisis

On April 25th 2015, CVIMS hosted a Refugee Sponsorship Forum. We proved to be ahead of the curve as, at the time, there was little public awareness or interest in the plight of Syrian refugees. The Refugee Sponsorship forum was sparsely attended with only 33 tickets sold with 10 speakers and organizers in attendance. Feedback however was very positive, especially in light of the high quality of speakers we had from across the country: Hosted by Maureen Shakespeare, Secretary CVIMS Board of Directors and retired Citizenship & Immigration Canada Officer; Elisha Kapell-Seguin, Assistant Director Western Region, Citizenship & Immigration Canada; Nadine Nasir, Trainer, Refugee Sponsorship Training Program (RSTP); Caroline Dailly, Manager & Abdallah Khalifa, Counsellor, Resettlement Assistance Program, ISS of BC; Morgan McGuigan & Maryanne O'Halloran, Ladysmith Refugee Sponsorship Group

At our AGM in September, The Society announced creation of the Syrian Refugee Fund and made a donation of \$20,000 to seed the fund. By March 31, 2015, a very generous, local community had donated an additional \$17,905. From the fund, \$14,189 was used for supports such as dentures, bedding, housing supplements, hearing aids, trauma counselling, baby clothes, bike helmets for children, bus passes for school aged children, interpreting & translation.

On September 17th, 2015 CVIMS issued a press release, available on the following page.

In response to media coverage of the desperate situation of the Syrian refugees, we also received a significant increase in requests for information on refugee sponsorship. A further Refugee Sponsorship Information Session was held on September 21st from 7:00 - 9:00 pm at the Beban Park Social Centre. Guest speakers included representatives from a Refugee Sponsorship Agreement Holder and a Refugee Sponsorship group. The session was well attended by many interested members of the community.

We hired Samantha Letourneau as Refugee Sponsorship Coordinator to provide training and support to local Refugee Sponsorship Groups. In December, when Samantha was hired to fill a position of Settlement Team the Leader (now Manager), Karla Duarte assumed the position of Refugee Sponsorship Coordinator.

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Central Vancouver Island
Multicultural Society

Services for Immigrants, Refugees
& Work Permit Holders

Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society



September 17th, 2015
For Immediate Release

The Board of Directors of The Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society announces initiative to support regional Refugee Sponsorship groups

In 1979, in response to the crisis of displaced Vietnamese refugees, a committee of local concerned citizens came together to form The Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society.

Now, 36 years later the Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society is a large, thriving organization with the capacity and resources to support local efforts addressing the Syrian Refugee crisis, the largest humanitarian crisis of our time.

Effective immediately:

1. We will staff a position to help coordinate sponsorship efforts in the region.
2. We will open a fund for tax deductible donations to be made on-line or in person. 100% of the funds raised will go towards funding sponsorship groups supporting local refugee families. Our Society will cover the credit card processing fees and costs of administering the funds.
3. In addition, The Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society will seed that fund with \$20,000 from our reserve savings.

It's been five years since the onset of the civil war in Syria and there is no end in sight. Today, there are four million Syrians who have been forced to leave their country, and every day the numbers grow.

We urge our members, partners, leaders and community to join us in funding and promoting this initiative.

On September 21st at 7:00 PM, Beban Social Centre we will host a Syrian Refugee Sponsorship Session to provide information and coordinate community efforts. All are welcome to attend.

To make a donation to the Syrian refugee fund, log-on to www.cvims.org

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Society supports refugee process

GROUPS WORKING
to bring Syrians to
Canada.

BY NICHOLAS PESCOD
THE NEWS BULLETIN

The ongoing civil war in Syria has forced millions to flee the country in search of a better life.

And with no end to the civil war in sight, a handful of groups in the Harbour City are hoping to bring refugees to the Island.

Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society executive director Hilde Schlosar says those who want to sponsor a refugee should do so with an existing group, such as a church.

"We suggest that you get involved with a group that exists already and help them as part of the sponsorship group or their wider volunteer and fundraising needs," she said.

According to Schlosar, there are more than five groups within the Nanaimo region that are working toward sponsoring a refugee, including Brechin United Church.

Schlosar says people should contact the society, which will then put them in touch with one of the numerous groups

involved in sponsoring a refugee.

"There are quite a number of groups that already exist ... and if they are interested in joining a sponsorship group or starting their own group, they can connect with us and we will connect them with the groups."

Sponsoring a refugee is a complicated and time-consuming process. Under the Canadian Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program there are three main types of sponsorships: privately sponsored, joint assistance sponsorship and government assisted.

Quick facts

CENTRAL VANCOUVER ISLAND

Multicultural Society provides guidance in sponsoring refugees. Visit www.cvims.org.

Groups of five or more Canadian citizens or permanent residents, who are over the age of 18, can sponsor refugees through the private-sponsored program. Legally, sponsors or sponsorship groups must commit up to one year of basic financial support and care for a refugee.

"It requires a significant amount of money and commitment for a year when they

are here..." she said. "Some sponsorship groups have been waiting as long as a year and a half for their refugee to arrive."

While the financial support can be a daunting task on its own, sponsors need to consider even the smallest details, such as trying to ensure everything from respecting and honouring the refugees' religious customs to helping them integrate into Canadian society. The multicultural society provides settlement services for refugees.

Schlosar says if people don't want to sponsor a refugee, there are other ways to help out.

"There are opportunities for volunteers to assist groups in fundraising and collecting goods and donations for the families when they arrive," Schlosar said.

The society has also established a refugee fund on its website.

"The money goes entirely to the families that end up here in our region, Nanaimo and regional district," Schlosar said. "So none of their money is going overseas and none of it is being spent on administration, but it is actually designated for families."

For more information please visit www.cvims.org.

arts@nanaimobulletin.com

IN HER OWN WORDS

Nanaimo group opens arms and hearts

Six families combine to sponsor Syrian refugee family of four, and are anxiously awaiting their arrival

Yesterday, in a quiet place away from the glare of the media, a family of four refugees from Syria arrived in Nanaimo.

In the days to come we hope to introduce them to you, but for today, we'd like you to meet the group responsible for bringing them here.

KATE GIRARD FOR THE DAILY NEWS

"It's not me." With these three words, Mike Mann begins our interview. An hour or so later, he ends it the same way. "I'm just the representative. It's a group effort."

Mann may be humble about the part he plays, but he is passionate about his project.

Mann, his wife Becky, and six other Nanaimo families have joined together to sponsor a family of refugees from Syria.

"We're all getting pretty excited," Mann said.

The Canadian government has promised to bring 25,000 refugees from Syria to our country. Included in that number are the many refugees who are sponsored by private citizens such as the Manns and the other members of their group.

Canada is the only country with a system for private sponsorship.

The Manns were drawn to support refugees long before Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced his commitment. When I ask what led to their decision, Mike is typically thoughtful.

"We had both lived in Africa for a couple of years," he said, "and that always shapes your view of the world, when you live in a developing country. You appreciate what a good country we live in. Our sense here of comfort and security that is not the norm in other countries."

He remembers how Canada reacted during the time of the Vietnamese boat people, "how we as a country came together and acted very quickly to bring in 50,000 refugees from south-east Asia."

Mike thinks all of us can empathize with the refugee experience. Most people know what it is like to be new somewhere. When we change jobs or move to a new community, adapting isn't always easy.

We can only imagine what it might be like to leave behind everything we know, survive a life-threatening journey, endure years in a refugee camp,



Six Nanaimo families have joined forces to sponsor a refugee family from Syria. Participants include: (standing from left) Anne Kerr, Jean Michel Hanssens, Debbie Munro, Randy Munro, Chris Burnley, Sandra Franklin; (sitting) Caroline Burnley, Becky Mann, Meg Savory, Mike Mann. Missing from the photo are Jeff Lott, Penny MacCourt, Fergus MacCourt (COURTESY KATE GIRARD)

and then arrive in a completely new country.

By September of 2015, weeks before the Canadian government set the goal of 25,000, the Manns were "90 per cent committed" to sponsoring a refugee family. However, they worried about the obligations of sponsorship.

Then, the photo of three-year old Aylan Kurdi appeared on the front pages of newspapers worldwide. In Nanaimo, the Immigrant Welcome Centre was flooded with phone calls from people asking how they could help. The centre decided to hold an information session on private refugee sponsorship.

Mike attended. There he connected with Sandra Franklin, Meg Savory, and Jeff Lott, and invited them to a meeting at his home. The sponsorship group had started to form.

Mann said that joining with others in the community made a difference. Sandra Franklin concurs.

"One person couldn't do it on their own. Finding the group was important to my decision," she said.

Other key players stepped into the picture at the information session. Tony Davis of St. Philip's Angli-

can church, Lantzville, and Anne Manikel of Brechin United, Nanaimo, attended. Manikel had recently called area churches together because they have a long history of refugee sponsorship. Davis had worked with his church to sponsor a refugee family a few years before.

"Once Mike recognized the value of Tony Davis' experience and knowledge, he invited Davis to the next group meeting. At that meeting, the group came to an important realization.

Working as private citizens to sponsor a refugee family was a long, involved process. However, Davis knew an easier way. Several national churches had been designated as Sponsorship Agreement Holders by the federal government. They could expedite the process.

Mann's group decided to sponsor a family through the Anglican Church of Canada as the SAH. Davis's home church of St. Philip's in Lantzville would partner with them.

With Mann's group carrying the responsibility of financing and supporting the refugees, the church was happy to facilitate the process.

Davis helped them draw up a

budget. Private sponsorship entails covering all the family's expenses for one year, although the federal government pays for 50 per cent of the year at welfare rates.

The group decided they could sponsor a refugee family of two adults and two children. Though the financial commitment is substantial, fundraising may help reduce the amount.

Of course, it may also be possible for the refugees themselves to find employment and cover some of the costs.

The sponsorship group's commitments go beyond the financial.

Together they must find accommodation, furnish a complete household, connect the family with language training and other educational resources, search for job opportunities, set up services such as bank accounts and cellphones, and offer emotional and social support through the first year.

Fortunately, the members of Mann's sponsorship group have a range of skills.

Their professions include social worker, businessperson, accountant, psychologist, training consultant, environmental scientist, healthcare

workers, RCMP officers, library worker, VIU professor, and nurse.

Clearly, they make a great team to support a family through its first year in Canada.

Choosing a family to sponsor was not easy. The group decided to select from a list of "travel-ready" refugees — all approved by the government of Canada.

Mann said it was "shocking" to read all the names. It was not possible to help everyone.

"It was like *Schindler's List*. I'll take you. I can't fit you in."

The group knew they had resources to support a family of four. They were also looking for a family who would adjust well to life on Vancouver Island.

Their first few choices from the list had already been taken by other sponsorship groups. However, they applied again for a Syrian family of four, two parents and young adult son and daughter.

The match was made. And now the time of waiting is over.

Has all the effort been worth it so far?

"Absolutely yes," Franklin said "I believe in giving my time. It's a valuable thing to do with one's life."

Mann agrees.

"Despite tragic circumstances, it has actually been quite enjoyable. It's always good to be part of something bigger than yourself."

Working together, this group of families is determined to make a difference in the lives of another family. And they encourage other Nanaimo community members to do what they can.

"You don't have to do a major big thing," said Franklin. "I just think people should contribute in any way. Anything is appreciated, from furniture to time to money."

"Take a step," said Mann. "Call the Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society (250-753-6911 Ext. 105). Get connected."

Inquiries are also encouraged by the Nanaimo Community Refugee Sponsorship group, a coalition of private sponsors such as Mann's group.

If you have accommodation or furniture and household items in good condition (no clothes), contact NCRS at their email: welcomenanaimo@gmail.com.

*Kate Girard is the communications coordinator for the Nanaimo Community Refugee Sponsorship group (250-245-7516)

Until now, there was no hope

THE AL MANSOUR FAMILY SHARES ITS STRUGGLE TO FLEE SYRIA AND SURVIVE IN A REFUGEE CAMP BEFORE BEGINNING A NEW LIFE IN NANAIMO

BY NICHOLAS PESCO
THE NEWS BULLETIN

Mohammad Al Mansour, his wife Wedad Idris and their two children Ahmad, 21, and Chiraz, 19, gather around a coffee table inside a perfectly normal-looking home near downtown Nanaimo.

There is a sense of joy, peace and happiness that fills the atmosphere of their home and as they laugh and smile it's plainly obvious they are thankful for the little things.

Life in the Harbour City is a far cry from the horror they left behind in their once happy and loving hometown of Al Qusayr, Syria.

The Al Mansours are privately sponsored Syrian refugees and were the first to arrive in the Harbour City this year. Through an Arabic translator, the family shared its journey from the Middle East to Nanaimo.

"Until now there was no

hope," Ahmad said.

Only a few years ago, 2010 to be precise, the Al Mansours lived a life filled with hard work, love, happiness and what can only be described as normalcy. Mohammad worked long hours as a leather distributor, farmer and butcher, while Wedad worked as a health inspector. Both Ahmad and Chiraz were in high school and enjoying life.

They lived in a nine-bedroom house – something common within the suburban city – made from Mediterranean-style stone and surrounded by palm trees and lush gardens filled with flowers. Their house was a central gathering point for friends and family, located some 12 kilometres away from the home was the family farm.

"It was a happy place with friends all around," Mohammad said.

But what was once a beautiful home and life gradually changed into a world filled with violence, hate and death.



CHRIS BUSH/THE NEWS BULLETIN

Mohammad Al Mansour, clockwise from top left, Wedad Idris, his wife, and their two children Ahmad Al Mansour and Chiraz Al Mansour are making a new life in Nanaimo after they fled Syria and spent several years living in a refugee camp in Lebanon. Their other two children are still making their way through sponsoring agencies.

In early 2011, the Arab Spring took hold across the Middle East, including Syria, where thousands of people began protesting against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and his government, in hopes of political reform. The Syrian government responded with violence and crackdowns against the protesters and eventually the situation spun out of control.

"The whole equation shifted," Ahmad said.

By June of that year, protests

toward the Syrian government and unrest had spread across the country, including in Al Qusayr, where 16 protesters were killed by government forces, according to the Al Mansours. The Syrian government and supporters of al-Assad responded by bombing Al Qusayr, destroying properties, kidnapping people regardless of religion and killing people at random.

"I was always scared. I was always in fear," Chiraz, who was

14 at the time, said. "Every time I heard shootings or bombings I thought 'OK maybe I'll die this time.'"

Almost everything the Al Mansours owned, including their farm, was eventually destroyed by the government and its supporters.

They say the government forces and supporters did anything they could to civilians simply as a way to humiliate them.

See 'FAMILY'S' /7

Tuesday, March 29, 2016 Nanaimo News Bulletin 7

Family's only option to flee war-ravaged Syrian homeland

From /1

"How could this happen?" Chiraz asked. "We would never predict this in a million years. We are so safe. It was totally safe.

"I didn't think under any circumstances that I would see this day," Chiraz said.

By late summer and early fall, the situation became so bad that the Al Mansours realized the only option was to flee to Lebanon. In order to convince their children to leave the home, Mohammad and Wedad told Ahmad and Chiraz that they would only be gone for a couple of days, but the reality was they wouldn't be coming back anytime soon.

"We didn't want to leave the house even though there were bombings," Ahmad said. "We felt safer at home, even though there were bombings outside."

Wedad, along with Ahmad and Chiraz, left for Lebanon first, while Mohammed followed them in early 2012. The family members left Syria with basically nothing and took all of their life savings with them, more than \$100,000.

"That was everything we had and worked for our entire lives," Mohammad said.

Getting to Lebanon was neither easy nor affordable, and often required the Al Mansours to walk for more than eight hours at a time, passing various safe points. The journey took roughly two weeks for Wedad, Ahmad and Chiraz, while it took Mohammad a little longer.

"We weren't thinking of coming back," Mohammad said. "We just wanted to save our lives in that moment."

They explained that in order to get to Lebanon, they had to pass through a series of checkpoints either on foot or by car. The checkpoints were patrolled by the Syrian military or others who would often charge around \$1,000 per person to pass each point.

Mohammad said he paid roughly \$20,000 per person to get from Syria to Lebanon and that thousands of people died making the trek.

When the entire family had reached the refugee camp in Zahle, Lebanon, they had escaped the violence in Syria, but their life in Lebanon was far from comfortable.

"We were safe from bombing and shootings in Syria, but there are also other types of discomforts," Mohammad said. "A lot of humiliation and kidnapping and abuse."

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www.nanaimobulletin.com

NEWS

Refugee camp provides little safety

SECOND PART
of family's story
begins in Lebanon.

BY NICHOLAS PESCOD
THE NEWS BULLETIN

It was 2012 and Mohammad Al Mansour, his wife Wedad Idris and two children Ahmad and Chiraz Al Mansour found themselves tucked inside a makeshift warehouse turned refugee camp in Zahle, Lebanon.

After spending weeks and tens of thousands of dollars to reach the safety of Lebanon, the Al Mansours quickly discovered that life inside the refugee camp was one of pure chaos and near anarchy. It would become their home for more than three years.

"There was no system. Everything was corrupt," Mohammad told the News Bulletin through an Arabic translator. "It is like you are living in a forest of madness."

By the time the family members were united in Lebanon, they had roughly \$50,000 left of their entire life savings and were living in a refugee camp. Camp rules prevented many from working and in addition to having to pay around \$250 a month for a small space consisting of two tiny rooms and a kitchen, the Al Mansours, along with the other refugees, found themselves having to buy food and basic essentials just to survive.

"We weren't thinking of dying, we were thinking about how we would get water," Mohammad said.

The Al Mansours said the camp had one store where refugees could purchase items, but the prices were set by those who ran the shop and it was difficult to bargain. Water, barely enough to wash and drink, would cost around \$7 per day.

"You can't work. You can't leave the refugee camp," Mohammad said. "At least if we could work, I wouldn't



CHRIS BUSH/THE NEWS BULLETIN

Mohammad Al Mansour describes his life before leaving Syria and the experiences of living as a refugee in Lebanon before he and his family were finally accepted into Canada.

have worried because I could provide something for my kids."

While the governments of Saudi Arabia and Qatar donated tents and food, it was far from free. Those in charge of distributing the donated goods would often take advantage of the situation by forcing the refugees to purchase items that were intended to be free.

Over the weeks and months that followed, the family managed to survive. They were so focused on getting through each day that they didn't consider going to Europe as so many other Syrians elected to do.

"We weren't thinking about moving or going somewhere

else," Wedad said.

Although working and leaving camp was not allowed, individuals managed to get past security to find jobs. Chiraz found work as a dental assistant for a short time while Ahmad worked as a contractor during the summer months, making \$20 a day for 12 hours of work. It wasn't much money, but every little bit helped.

In the spring of 2014, Mohammad was contacted by the United Nations asking if he would be interested in being settled in either the "English" or "French" part of Canada, to which he said yes to English Canada.

"We were all nervous about the unknown," Wedad

said. "We were happy that we were going to leave but we were nervous for the unknown."

A little more than a year later, the Al Mansours left the Lebanese refugee camp and arrived in Nanaimo this past January. When they boarded the airplane for Canada, the family had spent all its savings.

"When we came to Canada, we were totally broke," Wedad said. "We didn't even have one dime in our pocket."

Their arrival in the Harbour City is due to the efforts of a group of Nanaimo residents, who sponsored a family in need.

"We will never forget this moment for as long as we live," Mohammad said.

Today the Al Mansours are living happily in the Harbour City, where they have a renewed sense of optimism. They're working hard to learn English, looking forward to becoming productive members of society and extremely grateful for a second chance and all the help they've received since being in Nanaimo.

"We didn't expect that kind of help," Mohammad said. "We were surprised at the amount of people who sacrificed their time and effort to make us feel comfortable. We were overwhelmed by the reaction and we didn't expect it at all."

For Ahmad, he dreams of becoming an engineer while Chiraz has aspirations of becoming a doctor, but said she has also an interest in journalism.

"Before there was no hope. Now we have a future. Now we can pursue our dreams and we can do something for our lives," Ahmad said. "It has all shifted."

The Al Mansours also have another son and a daughter, both of whom are married with families of their own. Two separate groups in Nanaimo have sponsored the son and daughter in an effort to reunite the whole family.

reporter2@nanaimobulletin.com

RAP – Refugee Resettlement Assistance Program

Moving ahead by 11 months from the first Refugee Sponsorship Forum, with a new federal government and a commitment to settlement 25,000 Syrian refugees by March 2016, we were offered a sub-contract with ISS of BC to deliver the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) for GARS (Government Assisted Refugees) to be destined to Nanaimo, due to Vancouver’s diminishing capacity for housing.

A RAP program provides support for the basics upon the arrival of a Government Assisted Refugee: welcome and transportation from the airport, arranging temporary accommodation and then permanent housing, food, personal care items and help with shopping, arranging medical screenings and appointments, transportation, receiving their furniture and household package, help with moving in and setting up a home, etc.

We put our small RAP team together and on March 3rd, welcomed 8 Syrian families - 19 adults, 9 youth, 6 toddlers and 6 babies - at Victoria Airport. They quickly settled at the downtown Nanaimo Travelodge for temporary accommodation. The Travelodge was chosen because it has kitchenettes, is centrally located near our services, shopping, buses, the Islamic Centre and Fairview School.

Upon arrival we arranged for families to open bank accounts and shop for food, clothing and essentials. We also facilitated Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)’s process for complete registration and direct deposit of their one year living allowances.

Within days, Island Health quickly and expertly organized full health screenings for all 38 at the Health Unit. They closed the facility for a day and provided 8 teams to screen everything from basic dental, eye, hearing and blood pressure to immunizations and urgent care needs. Arabic speaking interpreters were on-site and the families reported feeling respected, supported and safe.

While awaiting their housing, we held make-shift ESL classes at the hotel, thanks to the generosity and support of the Travelodge in allowing us to use their breakfast room. By the end of March we had found permanent housing for 6 of the families, with the last 2 moved in later in April. In the meantime, another GARS family relocated from Hamilton, Ontario and were housed shortly after arrival.

Nanaimo Ladysmith School District enrolled the children and started ‘Welcoming’ classes at Fairview to do further needs assessments and give them a gradual introduction into our system.

The community really came together with many donations of cash, clothing, furniture and household items; driving, interpreting, bicycles, discounts and social support for all of the families.

City’s Welcome Reception for New Immigrants

Mayor Bill McKay and members of Council hosted the 4th Annual WELCOME RECEPTION for new immigrants on Saturday, March 5th, 2016 at the VI Conference Centre. Approximately 200 invited guests attended. Since the Government Assisted refugees had just arrived 2 days earlier, it was an exciting opportunity for them to be welcomed to the community. A number of dignitaries were also in attendance.

Citizenship Ceremonies

Becoming a citizen of your chosen country is a very important occasion and is celebrated by the many families and friends who come to witness the Swearing of the Oath. It is a solemn, moving event.

For many years, it has been the great honour of CVIMS to attend the Citizenship Ceremonies held in Nanaimo with our participation ranging from that of host, to invited guest speaker, to local service provider supporting Canada's newest citizens – and we have been proud to participate in all of these roles. In June 2015, the ceremonies included 300 people in 3 ceremonies!! This spring, we had occasion to feel a renewed sense of pride as two of our staff were invited to take their Oath of Citizenship at the ceremony on March 17th. Congratulations to Ming Frederick, Settlement Worker and Elena Cherkasova, Employment Consultant!!

The ceremonies were conducted by Citizenship Judge Pash and facilitated by staff from Citizenship & Immigration Canada. Dignitaries from each level of government and a representative of CVIMS were invited to congratulate our new citizens.

Citizenship classes

Citizenship classes are designed to help applicants prepare for the Citizenship Test. Delivered in 8 parts, the sessions cover such topics as the Rights and Responsibilities of Canadians, Canadian history and geography, government, politics, economy, and society. Two classes were run 2015–2016 fiscal year, in May and in September. A BIG THANKS to the volunteer Facilitators, Suki Davis and Ruth Anderson.

Port Theatre Collaborations



Bollywood Masala Orchestra and Dancers of India: The Spirit of India - CVIMS was a proud Show Sponsor - Investor in the Arts for this event on September 27.



Mulan Percussion Musical: 2016 Lunar Year Gala - organized by the Nanaimo Chinese Cultural Society on February 5th. The Nanaimo Chinese Cultural Society generously donated \$1,000 from the proceeds to CVIMS

Intern Placement

We engaged Bah Ibrahim, a VIU MBA intern, to help us to develop a coordinated approach for our Volunteer services. His efforts helped us to define the processes to coordinate the recruitment, training and engagement of volunteers. During his internship, the Government Assisted Refugee families arrived in Nanaimo and the need to coordinate many volunteers became urgent. Bah was able to make significant contributions to the Refugee Assistance Program (RAP) and to the good work of the Society as part of his placement. His efforts were greatly appreciated.

Communications and Social Media



The cvims.org website continues to be a valuable resource to share information about the Society with users of the internet. Because it is maintained in-house, we are able to update it regularly as changes occurred. Along with information about programs and services, the site included an Events Calendar allowing viewers to see at a glance WHAT'S HAPPENING at the Society and in our community. Subscribers to our electronic newsletter and weekly events receive regular email updates from the Society. Individuals can subscribe to the mailing list when they visit our Centre or online through our website at cvims.org. The IWC Facebook page has almost 1000 followers and Twitter feed has over 681 followers. Both were used to send out news, events, and announcements about the Society.

Multicultural Festival 2015



Administrative Staff



HILDE SCHLOSAR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



NANETTE LEATHER
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR



ROBERT DAWKES
PROGRAM DIRECTOR



WENDY PEPPERDINE
ACCOUNTANT



MANOELA CURADO
RECEPTION / CLIENT
SERVICES

IMMIGRANT SETTLEMENT SERVICES

Submitted by Samantha Letourneau, Settlement Manager

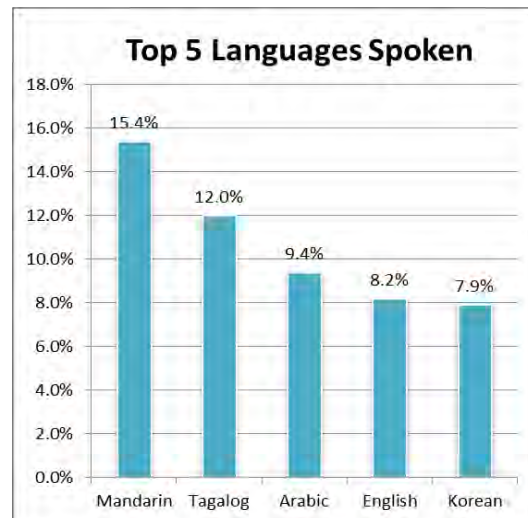
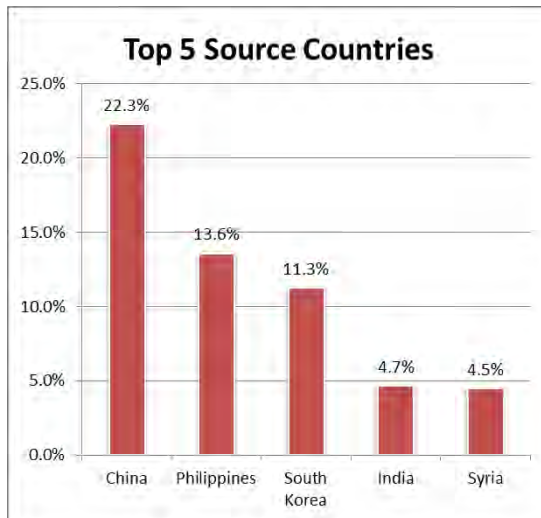
Funder: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC); BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training



SETTLEMENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Settlement Support Services were delivered through drop-in and appointments by settlement workers in the year 2015 - 2016. The individual services ranged from one-off support in providing information on Canadian life and providing referrals to other services in the community, and on-going case management support.

We assisted approximately 1320 clients. Over half of our clients landed in Canada either through family sponsorship or federal skilled worker programs. Over 60% of our clients were between 19 to 64 years old at the time of the intake. 58% of our clients are women and 41.9% are men. The clients came from 82 different countries and spoke 67 different languages. This year our services saw a dramatic increase in privately sponsored refugees, mostly coming for Syria, and nine Government Assisted Syrian refugee families.



The settlement workers provided more extensive individually tailored one-on-one support to more isolated and vulnerable clients. Two settlement workers received the training on safety planning around domestic violence and the training on the Family Law Act to support immigrants who are going through separation/divorce. Two settlement workers received training in Cultural Safety. In 2015, the Settlement Program hired a new Settlement Manager, Samantha Letourneau, who had worked previously for the Society for three years as Diversity Coordinator and new settlement staff member - Daisy Bereska.

In 2016, the Settlement program hired new staff to take on the Resettlement Assisted Program (RAP) for the Government Assisted Refugees. This short term contract was executed by Feras Saedam. He was responsible for supporting the families through the following activities:

- meeting the refugee at the airport
- securing temporary accommodation;
- help in finding permanent accommodation;
- basic household items; and
- general orientation to life in Nanaimo.

As well, with an increase of Syrian Refugees coming to the Central Vancouver Island area, we hired an Arabic speaking Settlement worker, Ahmad Briz. He has been working in Nanaimo for five years as a community and mental health support worker.

Throughout the year, the staff provided a number of community outreach activities to promote community connections among immigrants, in relation to other service providers, and within the community in general. These outreach activities included but not limited to attending community meetings, hosting an information booth and hosting community partners to deliver their services at CVIMS facility. These partnerships resulted in reduced barriers to access for immigrants and ensured the accurate information to be delivered.

Settlement workers coordinated the service delivery and the interpretation service for community partners such as School District 68, Community Dental Hygiene Program through Island Health, and Nanaimo Division of Family Practice. As part of the settlement services, the settlement workers and community volunteers

assisted over 100 low to middle income newcomers to file their income tax returns under the Community Volunteer Income Tax Clinic with Canada Revenue Agency.

It has been a busy and exciting year for CVIMS Settlement program. We would like to thank the many volunteers that assisted us this year in making Nanaimo feel like home for many newcomers. We would also like to thank Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and the Province of British Columbia for their financial support.

Settlement Staff



SAMANTHA
LETOURNEAU
SETTLEMENT MANAGER



RIM SHIN
SETTLEMENT WORKER



JENNIFER BRICKER
SETTLEMENT WORKER



MING FREDERICK
SETTLEMENT WORKER



CINDY QIN
SETTLEMENT WORKER



AHMAD BRIZ
SETTLEMENT WORKER



DAISY BERESKA
SETTLEMENT WORKER



FERAS SAEDAM
RAP COORDINATOR

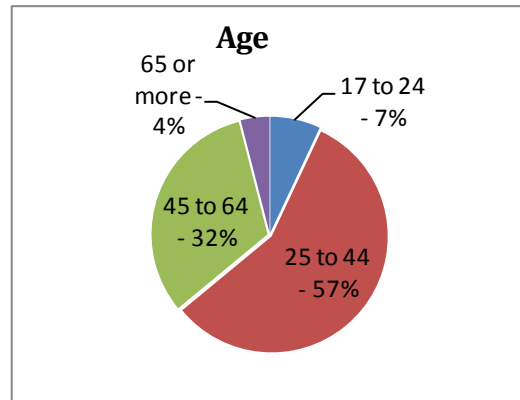
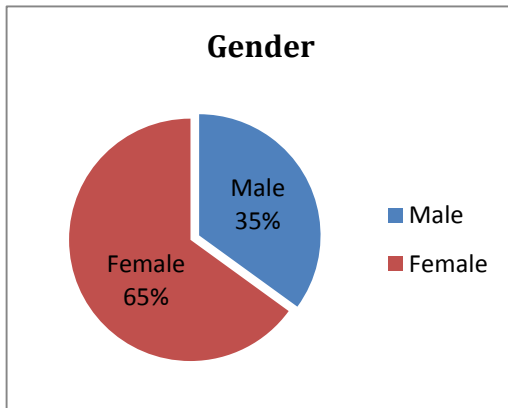
LANGUAGE PROGRAM LINC

Submitted by Jillian Yun, LINC Program Coordinator

Funder: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC); BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training

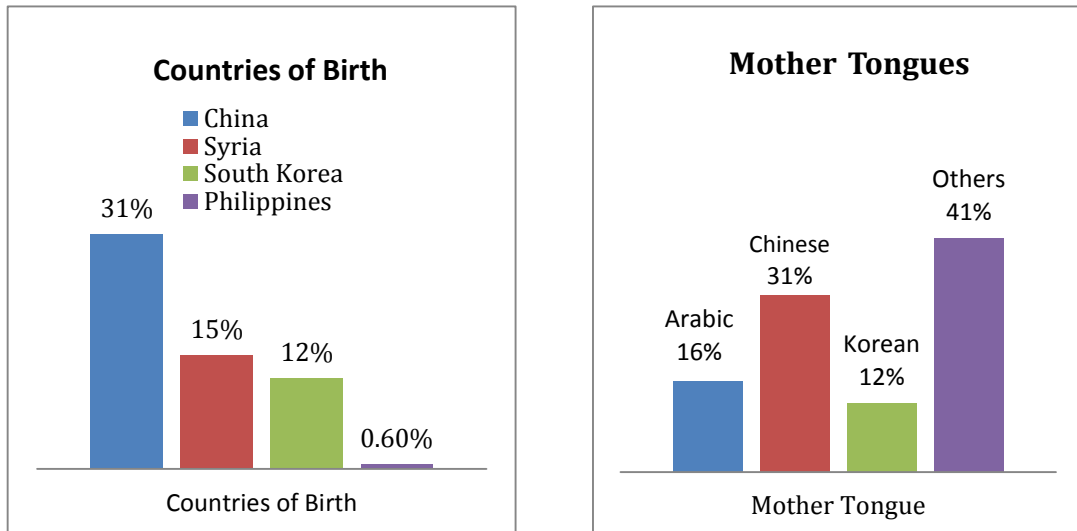
With the majority of funding from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and top up funding from the provincial government, we provide high-quality English language training called Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) to help newcomers develop the language skills and become active and successful citizens of Canada. Since the transition from the provincial funding to the federal funding in April 2014, our LINC program has been growing in terms of the number of the classes and students, and diversity of the student demographics. Offering LINC levels 1 to 7/8 and a multi-level evening LINC 5/6/7, we maintained over 100 students reaching up to nearly 140.

A total of 154 clients were assessed to attend the LINC classes. Their primary objective for seeking language training was participating in Canadian society followed by finding employment.



From April 2015 to March 2016, a total of 273 students received English language training for this period. About twice as many of the students were female, and those between 25 to 44 years of age made up the largest proportion in the classes.

As refugee clients started joining the LINC program in 2016, it affected the demographic of our students in the LINC classes; Syria has become the second largest country of birth in our LINC classes as Arabic ranked second as the mother tongue of all of the students' languages.



In addition to Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSR), we welcomed Government Assisted Refugee (GAR) families from Syria in March 2016. In order to accommodate their immediate needs, two English classes were offered during spring break at their temporary lodgings.

Some of the LINC students participated in the ESL Customer Service Training for Hospitality and Retail sector as part of Project Based Language Training (PBLT). It was offered in two cohorts starting October 2015 and January 2016 respectively. Each course ran for 11 weeks covering workplace communication skills, resume and job interview preparation, labour market information, computer training, and effective networking, including one-week job practicum at different job sites. Through learning in class and one-week job practicum, students learned and refined their communication skills at work and grew confident in working at the Canadian workplace. More on this PBLT program in the Employment section of this report.

One of the significant changes going forward will be the Portfolio Based Language Assessment (PBLA). Instead of a one time standardized testing to evaluate students' progress, students compile their learning examples of listening, speaking, reading, and writing into their binder called Language Companion over the course of learning. Various tasks and feedback, peer assessments and self-assessments will be evidence of the student's performance, and the progress will be discussed and measured based on the examples collected. Emika, the lead teacher of PBLA has completed the PBLA Foundations for Lead Instructors course and began implementation in her LINC 5 class starting February 2016. As our new term is commencing in September, the lead teacher will begin to introduce PBLA to other LINC instructors. After a successful application and transition phase, PBLA will be fully implemented in all of our LINC classes in April 2017.

The clients who were unable to attend class in person due to work schedule conflict, family commitment or residing in an unfit location benefited from LINC Home Study program.

LINC has had one of the busiest years this reporting period. Through the constant changes, we were able to strive to meet the learners' best interests with our exceptional LINC teachers and help from the dedicated volunteer tutors. With them, we will continue to offer our best services and a top grade program to our students.



Year-end celebration – June 2015

LINC Staff



JILLIAN YUN
LINC PROGRAM
COORDINATOR



EMIKA ASANI
INSTRUCTOR,
LEVEL 3 & 5



BRIAN EGGIMAN
INSTRUCTOR,
LEVEL 6 & 7/8



NANCY HAYNE
INSTRUCTOR,
LEVEL 1/2



MAGGIE WOUTERLOOT
INSTRUCTOR,
LEVEL 4

HIPPY PROGRAM

Submitted by Swedini Halliday, HIPPY Manager

Funder: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC); BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training

Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) is a school readiness program that is offered to low income, isolated families. HIPPY recognizes the parent, primarily the mother, as the child's first and most important teacher. The thirty week curriculum is delivered to the mother by a Home Visitor. The mother uses the activities and practical information, provided in the lessons, to develop the cognitive, social, emotional and physical skills of the child.

When the HIPPY Program was launched by the Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society on May 27, 2014 the HIPPY site consisted of a Program Manager, two Home Visitors and twelve HIPPY families. Currently, the program is delivered by six Home Visitors to forty families and more families are expected to enroll in the program in September.

The HIPPY mothers continue to attend monthly group meetings where they socialize with other mothers. At these meetings the mothers received enrichment in Managing Misbehaviour, Nutrition, Disaster Preparation, Child Care Resources and Aboriginal Culture. A high percentage of mothers attended these meetings, higher than at the other HIPPY sites.

The HIPPY Graduation Ceremony was held on March 30th and was emceed by a CVIMS Board Member. The event was attended by the participants of the program, their family members and CVIMS staff. Thirteen children graduated after completing the two or three year program and the remainder of the children advanced to the next level.

The Home Visitors attended a three day HIPPY Conference in Vancouver. This presented them the opportunity to meet HIPPY staff from other sites in Canada and national dignitaries involved with the program. The Home Visitors were also pleased to volunteer their services at different workshops. Also, throughout the year, the Home Visitors received enrichment in Communication & Conflict, Avoidance Training, Domestic Violence and Child Abuse & Neglect.

CVIMS receives funding from Immigration and Refugee Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to offer the HIPPY program to eligible newcomers to Canada. The program also received a donation from the proceeds from the Multicultural Fest hosted by the Downtown Nanaimo Business Association. CVIMS also wishes to offer the program to all low income, isolated, Canadian born families and the Program Manager has been actively raising funds for this purpose. Consequently, CVIMS has received approximately \$4000.00 in private donations in the past year.

CVIMS actively participated in monthly Cultural Awareness Committee meetings and Greater Nanaimo Yearly Years Partnership sponsored events. As a member of the Cultural Awareness Committee, the Program

Manager was actively involved in developing and promoting the following projects: Many Leaves One Tree, Cultural Coffee Party, Diversity Definition and Literacy Kits from 10 different countries. Other activities included HIPPY Canada projects such as Coordinating the Adopt a Reader Program in Nanaimo, Developing the Parent Progress Report and the Home Visitor Progress Report and Integrating Professional Development Training Program to the Nanaimo HIPPY Site.

CVIMS is pleased that the HIPPY continues to be a successful program.

Naomi's Story – published in *Finding Home with HIPPY*, Nov 2015

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Naomi

Naomi is a HIPPY Mother in Nanaimo. She originally came from Japan to Canada for a year while studying and skiing in Whistler. She met her husband in Canada and decided to start a family and immigrate. Her daughter is four years old and she has a two-year-old son.

Naomi saw a lot of change in her daughter while doing HIPPY:

Yes, yes, totally, TOTALLY changed actually. Like, she's getting confident. Well, personally she is quite shy and she was always trying to do things hiding behind me and then she is not really an independent person. But she is getting confident... She didn't speak much in front of people, she probably could use more English properly and communicated it more and I think she's got confident more and started to be more independent from me.

Once she was interested in learning the alphabet she tried to use it...in the daycare and in the preschool. She tried to ask the teacher how to write down her name and the alphabet, the order. And she could actually write it down herself without me telling her.

"If I didn't do HIPPY I'm not sure she could write down her name!"

Naomi describes what she likes best about HIPPY:

Well, a lot of things are the best actually. Using a lot of different aspects, even sorting and reading comprehension, and numbers, and the alphabet, the phonics and sequencing. So this was fun. It's not just playing in play groups. There's play but there's still educational things in it so that's great.

HIPPY helped Naomi learn about education in Canada:

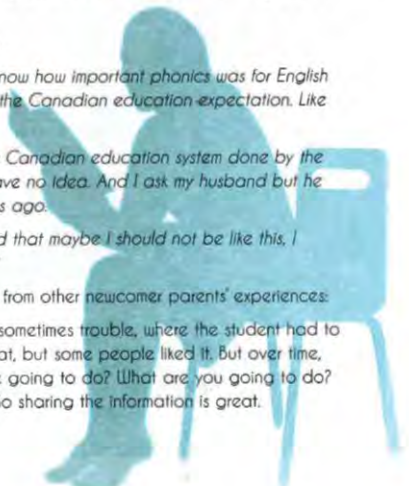
I grew up in Japan, I don't do the phonics, I didn't know how important phonics was for English speakers. And of course I didn't know about what is the Canadian education expectation. Like what that's supposed to be.

It was quite the help actually. I didn't really know the Canadian education system done by the kindergartens or how they teach in kindergarten. I have no idea. And I ask my husband but he doesn't know, you know that's like two, three decades ago.

We, both parents, are really easy-going but I learned that maybe I should not be like this, I should be more involved in her education.

Meeting other HIPPY parents has helped Naomi to learn from other newcomer parents' experiences:

Yeah, that's great because we had a kind of thing, sometimes trouble, where the student had to draw pictures and some of the students don't like that, but some people liked it. But over time, the same problems kept coming up: "So what are we going to do? What are you going to do? What should we say? Should we let them do that?" So sharing the information is great.



HIPPY introduced Naomi to other services for newcomers:

But when I first came to Canada I really didn't know what was going on, that's why it took so long. I've been here for twelve years and I'm starting to use the services right now.

Naomi explains how she has changed while being a HIPPY Mother:

It's hard to describe myself. I've tried to be more patient. I know I am teaching a four-year-old, I'm not teaching an adult, so I have to be patient but sometimes usually the mother is busy all the time. But I've learned myself, I've tried to calm down and be more patient. And definitely through this program I have noticed her strengths and what she needs to be improved, or good or bad things.



HIPPY Staff



SWEDINI HALLIDAY
HIPPIY MANAGER

HOME VISITORS:

- CINDY CHEN
- ENNA KURINA
- TRACEY MAO
- STELLA PARK
- DAWN WEBB-MUGHAL
- HILARY WHITING

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Submitted by Angelika Valchar, Employment Manager

The Employment Services in 2015-2016 continued to build on its established and strong foundation while engaging in the delivery of high quality services to meet the changing needs of the community we serve. All employment staff continued to demonstrate high level of professionalism, flexibility, creativity and adaptability.

The year of 2015-2016 was a year of writing proposals for the Employment Department. During the year, we responded to a number of Calls for Proposals from different levels of government to address pressing community needs. We were awarded two new contracts **'Job Ready!'** and **'Permanent Resident ESL Customer Service Training for Hospitality and Retail – PBLT Project'**.

The **'PBLT Project'** ran from October 13, 2015 to March 31, 2016. We welcomed **Gerald Halabura** to the team as the project's main facilitator.

The classes focused on language development in the area of customer service for hospitality and retail utilizing various learning methods. The classes were held at the Greater Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce location which allowed the participants to connect further with community members. Participants had the opportunity to meet Parksville-Qualicum

MLA Michelle Stilwell, Nanaimo official Mayor-Bill McKay, CEO of Greater Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce Kim Smythe and many other community business members.

*Nanaimo Daily News
December 3/2015*



For the students, the highlight of the program was the work placement. For some of the participants this was their first Canadian work experience. Feedback from the local businesses who hosted these placements was positive and eye opening. They were impressed by the work ethic, commitment, language abilities, passion and skills. Employers were able to share information about their businesses, the practices and expectations while the participants gained first-hand experience working with customers and practicing language skills in real life situations.

Warmest thanks to the Greater Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce and these local businesses and organizations who volunteered to host work experience students:

- Olive This and More
- Inn on Long Lake
- Nissan of Nanaimo
- Northridge Fitness
- Herbal Magic at Metral Station
- Nanaimo Daily News
- Westmark Construction
- London Drugs – Port Place Mall
- Turley’s Florists
- Coast Bastion Hotel
- Harris Kia
- Loaves and Fishes
- Living Forest Campgroup
- Dan Morris, Royal LePage Realty, Nanaimo
- Downtown Nanaimo Business Improvement Association



Student Comments ..

“This class taught me many rules, regulations and the work ethic of customer service workplaces. Furthermore, we have chance to practice our speaking skills, conversation skills and telephone skills. We also know the workplace culture in Canada. This is really useful training class.”

C.

“Every new immigrant should go to this class to learn Canadian culture no matter if you will work or not. It will benefit your for your life time.”

B.W.

“I really enjoy this program. It’s very practical. What you learned from class can be used in the workplace right away. The work experience placement is one of the best parts of the program which gives you real experience in Canadian work place”.

H.L.

Success Story – Helen Lin



Mentorship and work experience in action

Helen Lin

My name is Helen Lin. I am from China. I have been in Canada as a permanent resident for approximately two years. Although I worked in different administrative and business ventures in China, my dream and goal in Canada is to own and operate a successful Bed and Breakfast. To do this, I have been learning English and also as much as I can about Canada, and the tourist service industry.

Starting last October, I attended the ESL Hospitality and Customer Services Course offered by Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society (CVIMS). After finishing the course, I found it really helped me to improve my English and my ability to communicate in the field of customer service. This 11-week course offers us lots of opportunity to practice speaking, listening and reading specifically in this area. We started to really learn and know Canadian culture, work ethic and how we could behave appropriately in the Canadian workplace. We learned to find our strengths, how to do time management, and how to set and achieve goals. We also learned to solve problems which might occur in the real work place, when you are working with customers, or in running your business.

The course offers a one-week work experience placement which I think is very useful for all of us. For most of our classmates, we had our first real Canadian work experience during this week. And we had the chance to experience the real work environment of Canada and learn how to convert our previous skills to the new work place.

During this week, I had the opportunity to work as a front desk agent at the Inn on Long Lake. This was an exciting experience where I learned not only how to be a front desk agent at a hotel, but also how real people who are part of a team deal with each other. My mentor, the manager of Inn on Long Lake, is a very nice and capable man. He has built up an efficient, but intimate working team offering their guests very good customer service. With the help of all the coworkers I worked with, I also gained confidence which might help a lot in my future potential work.

Working through case studies was also a favorite part of the class. We did a lot of role playing, where we had to deal with many difficult situations that are common in customer service. We tried to learn from those scenarios how to provide the right service to our customers.

I must also thank the Chamber of Commerce. It not only offered us a very good environment in which to study, but also a good opportunity to connect with many businesses in Nanaimo, which helps us to build up our own network.

I enjoyed the course. I not only learned English, but also acquired knowledge of how best to live and work in a different country, and build friendships with all the other people who attended the course. I feel much more prepared and confident to build my own business now.

The 'Job Ready!' program started in October 2015. The new program builds on the success of 'JOB Options BC'.

We have a new team joining CVIMS Wendy Phillips, Darcie Gabruck, Nancy Pardo and Douglas Haylock. We have said goodbye to Janice Coady.

'Job Ready' is a 14 week program that assists unemployed participants prepare for labour market attachment, or where appropriate, short term training. The program is delivered in three phases.

Phase 1 provides classroom instruction for a 6 week term to a maximum of 11 participants.

Phase 2 provides a group "touch back session", a networking opportunity for all job seekers. These are held at the Country Grocer Community Boardroom every Tuesday from 10:00AM-12:00PM. Phase 2 also provides one on one support with short term training, job development and wage subsidies based on the established action plan of each individual.



Phase 3 provides Case Management (one on one support) to all participants for a period of 6 months.

Email excerpt ...

...I am glad to inform that I got the job at Fairmont Empress as Building Maintenance Engineer. At last after few months of sacrifices getting to series of interviews it feels good that I think I got a job that I really want to do and related to the course that I have taken plus the compensation is better as well as the benefits.

I would like to extend my sincerest appreciation to Wendy for the support during the classroom seminar and trained me better in resume writing and built my self-confidence for interviews. My warmest thanks to Angelika who motivated me to the Job Ready program as much to Darcy and Doug as well for the unwavering support and guidance on job search updates and information.

Cheers!

Percival Catbagan

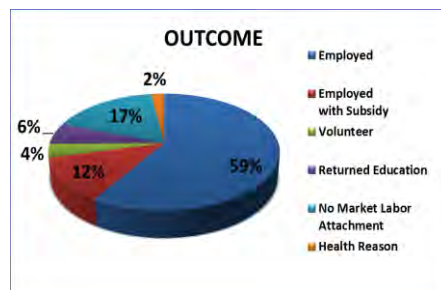
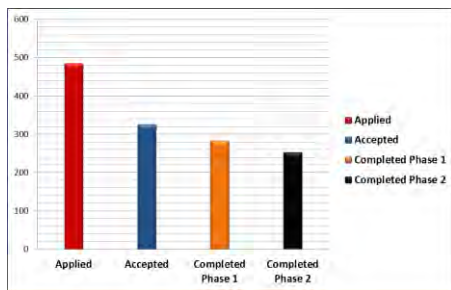
Success Story:

R.C. came to the Job Ready program seeking direction and help with her job search. She faced a variety of barriers to employment including low self-esteem and mental health issues. She had been to other local service providers for help, but was unsuccessful in securing employment. Through the Job Ready program, her confidence and self-esteem increased and she found a new career direction. With the help of a wage subsidy, she secured employment at a local restaurant. As her confidence grew in her new job, she received additional short-term training - two artisan baking courses at VIU. With the encouragement and support of

her employer and Job Ready staff, she is now beginning her apprenticeship and is well on her way to becoming a Red Seal certified chef!

Employment Program of BC / WORK BC continued providing valuable services and supporting immigrants in reaching their employment goals. The program has been extended till March 31, 2019. We welcomed **Elena Cherkasova** to the team in July 2015 and said good-bye to Beth Blackwood and Anna Thankachan.

Skills Connect under ASPECT completed its operation on March 31, 2016. We were able to extend our contract until September with very limited seats available under Immigrant Services Society of BC (*ISSofBC*). We also completed the very successful, 5-year contract '**Job Options BC**' with the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training. The tables below reflect numbers of clients being served and completed over the period of the whole contract as well as the outcomes.



In total, the Employment Department provided services to 317 clients. While helping individuals find employment, \$107,212.46 worth of financial support towards education, short-term training, credential evaluations and/or wage subsidies was provided to job seekers.

Employment Staff



ANGELIKA VALCHAR, CCDP
EMPLOYMENT MANAGER



CHARLEE TOUCHETTE, CCDP
EMPLOYMENT CONSULTANT



ELENA CHERKASOVA, CCDP
EMPLOYMENT CONSULTANT



JANICE COADY
JOB DEVELOPER



DOUGLAS HAYLOCK
JOB DEVELOPER



WENDY PHILLIPS
FACILITATOR



DARCIE GARUCK
EMPLOYMENT CONSULTANT



NANCY PARDO
PROGRAM ASSISTANT



GERALD HALABURA
PBLT PROJECT FACILITATOR

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

Submitted by Sue Luoma, ECE, Children's Program Coordinator

Funder: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC); BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training

As always it has been very busy in the Daycare room with 56 children in the LINC program this year with an average of 24 enrolled each month. We have also had another 100 children access services through HIPPY and other programs. This included 4 weeks of Summer programming for school age children 7-12 years and 1 week at Spring Break. A week of programming for the newly arrived GAR's school age children was also held.

One of the highlights for the children last spring was the hatching of our quail chicks in the incubator. The first ones hatched during class to great excitement and we ended up with 7 chicks. We also enjoyed the participation of our practicum students from Sprott Shaw and VIU and the new ideas and activities they brought.

Continuing to keep our community connections up to date so we can direct parents to services has been helped by our involvement in the School District's Healthy Start to Learning event, VIU ECE Community Advisory Panel and Early Childhood Educators of BC Nanaimo branch. We were also

pleased to be able to host a Saturday workshop for ECEBC Nanaimo. Presentations were also made to the VIU ECE second year class and PacificCare's Family Daycare Good Beginnings course.

I wish to thank the staff - Vania, Olena, Pasco, Denise & Gail for their dedication to maintaining the high standard for the program. And also a big thank you to our wonderful volunteers – Fiona, Pasco, Hala & Mariama for sharing their time & talents with us.



Daycare Staff



SUE LUOMA
CHILDREN'S PROGRAM
COORDINATOR



VANIA ZANETTI
CHILDREN'S PROGRAM
ASSISTANT



OLENA NAGORNA-KRYVONOS
CHILDREN'S PROGRAM
ASSISTANT



PASCO HAMBURG
CHILDREN'S PROGRAM
ASSISTANT

NO PHOTOS

GAIL COLLINS
DENISE JAMIESON
CHILDREN'S PROGRAM
ASSISTANTS

OUR PRIMARY PROGRAM CONTRACTS

- Immigration Refugees & Citizenship Canada
- B.C. Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training
- B.C. Ministry of Social Development/GT Hiring Solutions
- ASPECT
- Canadian Council for Refugees
- Immigrant Services Society of BC

A VERY SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR DONORS

April 1, 2015 – March 31, 2016

- City of Nanaimo \$23,511 property tax exemption
- Mosaic IT \$10,000 in Kind
- Society of St. Vincent De Paul
- Knights of Columbus
- Stephen R. Burri Law Corporation
- Trinity Catholic Church
- Remax of Nanaimo

...and our many, very generous, private donors!

Our sincere apologies if we missed anyone.

STAFF LIST - April 1st, 2015 – March 31st, 2016

Executive Director: Hilde Schlosar

Assistant Director: Nanette Leather

Program Director: Robert Dawkes

Reception and Client Services: Manoela Curado

Accountant: Wendy Pepperdine

Children's Program

Children's Program Coordinator: Sue Luoma

Children's Program Assistant: Vania Zanetti

Children's Program Worker: Olena Kryvonos Nagorna

On Call: Gail Collins, Pasco Hamburg, Denise Jamieson

LINC Program

LINC Coordinator: Jillian Yun

LINC Instructors: Emika Asani, Brian Eggiman, Nancy Hayne, Maggie Wouterloot

Employment Program

Employment Manager: Angelika Valchar

Employment Consultant: Charlee Touchette

Employment Consultant: Elena Cherkasova

Job Developer: Janice Coady*, Douglas Haylock

Facilitator: Wendy Phillips

Employment Consultant: Darcie Gabruck

Program Assistant: Nancy Pardo

PBLT Facilitator: Gerald Halabura

Immigrant Settlement Program

Settlement Manager: Samantha Letourneau

Settlement Worker: Rim Shin

Settlement Worker: Jennifer Bricker

Settlement Worker: Ming Frederick

Settlement Worker: Ahmad Briz

Settlement Worker: Cindy Qin

Settlement Worker: Daisy Bereska

HIPPY Program

HIPPY Manager: Swedini Halliday

Home Visitors: Cindy Chen, Enna Kurina, Tracey Mao, Stella Park, Dawn Webb-Mughal, Hilary Whiting

Contract LINC Assessor: Mary Peters

Contract Counsellor: Dr. Martine Charles

Contract Janitorial: Bastion Janitorial / Regency Commercial Cleaning

* left position

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART 2015-16



Central Vancouver Island
Multicultural Society

Organizational Chart

